



Charting the Course to 2025: The County of York Comprehensive Plan Review Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Meeting Notice

York County Environmental & Development Services Building
105 Service Drive, Yorktown
Monday, January 24, 2005
6:00 PM

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Telephone Survey Status Report**
- 3. Introduction to community appearance**

What do we as a community want York County to look like? This is a question we have asked the citizens on questionnaires and at the Neighborhood Open Houses, and it is one of the fundamental questions that a comprehensive plan seeks to address. What contributes to or detract from a site's aesthetic quality? Are there any particular examples of attractive or unattractive development? We will ask the Steering Committee at the meeting to begin identifying those design elements that contribute to the County's visual appeal and ought to be encouraged.

- 4. Review of community appearance initiatives**

York County has undertaken a variety of programs and initiatives intended to preserve and, where necessary, enhance its appearance. The Yorktown Historic District and Design Guidelines, for example, are designed to protect the appearance and architectural quality of Yorktown. In addition, the County has enacted zoning provisions designed to protect our major highway corridors and general site design guidelines that affect the appearance of new development. Through these regulatory measures as well as public investment strategies, tax incentives, and housing rehabilitation programs, the County is taking steps to enhance its attractiveness. We will review and discuss these initiatives and those of neighboring jurisdictions, such as James City County and the City of Williamsburg, that offer additional examples that might be worthy of replication.

- 5. Discussion of Possible Future Initiatives**

The Comprehensive Plan review and update is an opportunity to ask if there is more the County should be doing to enhance community appearance. Should corridor protection measures be extended to other roads? Are there new measures that should be considered? Is there more that can be done to remove or improve blighted properties?

- 6. Other**
- 7. Adjourn**

Attachments

- Meeting Notes of December 16, 2004



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Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Meeting Notes

York County Environmental and Development Services Building
Multi-Purpose Room
105 Service Drive
Monday, January 24, 2005
6:00 PM

Members Present: Nick Barba, Ken Bowman, Jack Christie, Jack Davis, Carole Ferro, A. T. Hamilton, Carl Loveland, Rick Moberg, Al Ptasznik, Ralph Smith

Staff Present: Mark Carter, Tim Cross, Earl Anderson, Frank Rogers

Chairman Barba called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Cross reported on the status of the telephone survey, which is currently underway. He distributed copies of the final version of the survey instrument and a news release issued by the County's Public Information Office notifying citizens of the survey and urging them to cooperate if called. Mr. Cross added that the consultants are scheduled to submit a report on the results no later than February 28.

Introducing the topic of community appearance and design, Mr. Cross noted that one of the fundamental questions that a comprehensive plan seeks to address, which the Committee and staff have asked the citizens on questionnaires and at the Neighborhood Open Houses, is "What do we as a community want York County to look like?" He asked the Committee for their feedback as to design elements that either contributes to or detract from the County's visual appeal and also to name some specific examples of attractive or unattractive development.

Items identified by various Committee members as contributing to the County's visual appeal include modern design, the diversity of residential neighborhoods, and underground utilities. Citing his neighborhood of Kiln Creek as an example of attractive development, Mr. Loveland mentioned curb and gutter, walking trails, and high-density housing with well-maintained open space as positive design elements. He also spoke about dual-use "live/work" developments where people live and work in a single development, which not only are visually appealing but also help to lessen road congestion. The Yorktown village was also mentioned as an attractive area because of its architecture and clean, well-maintained appearance, and Mr. Barba added that the Riverwalk Landing development would be very attractive once it is finished. It was suggested that a junk car ordinance and a minimum housing code addressing rehabilitation of existing properties would, if implemented, contribute to the County's attractiveness.

Negative features included blighted vacant buildings (graffiti, unkempt landscaping, trash, debris, and chain link fencing), open ditches filled with trash and leaves, and overhead power lines. Mr. Smith cited the Wal-Mart parking lot in Tabb as unattractive because of the lack of landscape islands. Mr. Davis commented on the need for the County to find a way to generate the funding needed to finance aesthetic enhancements. In response, Mr. Ptasznik questioned the need for the publicly funded purchase of blighted properties for the purpose of improving them to be sold for redevelopment rather than aggressively marketing the properties as they are and letting the purchaser pay for the improvements. Mr. Christie added that, because of general public skepticism about government use of revenues, any public funds raised for a specific pur-

pose such as blight removal should be earmarked and set aside specifically for that purpose rather than being absorbed into the General Fund.

Mr. Cross, Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Carter then gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining various programs and initiatives – including regulatory measures, public investment strategies, and tax incentives – that the County has undertaken to preserve and, where necessary, enhance its appearance and improve both commercial and residential properties. Mr. Rogers, Chief of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization for the County's Department of Community Services, spoke about the Local Rehabilitation/Emergency Home Repair Program. He explained that the program is available to low-income homeowners and assists them with emergency repairs that allow them to remain in their homes. Mr. Rogers also spoke about the County's Utility Connection Fee Assistance, Indoor Plumbing, and H2O programs.

Mr. Cross spoke about the Tourist Corridor Management (TCM) overlay district and the green-belt provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, both of which are intended to protect the appearance of the County's major highway corridors. He also noted similar corridor protection measures in neighboring James City County, whose comprehensive plan includes a "Community Character" element, and the City of Williamsburg.

Mr. Carter spoke about the County's various streetscape projects to improve the aesthetics along major highway corridors through the addition of landscaping and, in some cases, sidewalks. He also discussed the Route 17 revitalization program, which seeks to improve the Route 17 corridor through a combination of tax incentives, grant programs, and subsidies to encourage property owners to make improvements. Other possible strategies for Route 17, Mr. Carter noted, include the adoption of relaxed zoning standards to encourage redevelopment and extending the TCM designation to encompass the entire corridor. He also outlined the Yorktown Historic District and Design Guidelines, which the Board of Supervisors adopted in December 2003 to protect the appearance and architectural quality of Yorktown. Finally, Mr. Carter noted various other zoning provisions and general site design guidelines that affect the appearance of new development, including landscaping requirements, site lighting requirements, and sign regulations that allow monument signs to have more sign area than the more visually obtrusive pole signs.

Summarizing the presentation, Mr. Carter asked the Committee members to give consideration to other ways in which the County could enhance community appearance. Specifically, he asked them to think about whether there additional roads that should be designated as green-belt roads or TCM corridors or would benefit from a revitalization program similar to the Route 17 program and whether or not there are new measures that should be considered.

Chairman Barba reminded everyone that the next meeting would be on Monday, January 31 in the Multi-Purpose Room in the Environmental and Development Services Building. The Committee also discussed potential meeting dates in February.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

TCC